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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

January 29, 1954

Farm electricity report

FARMERS USE MORE ELECTRICITY
BUT AVERAGE COST PER KILOWATT-HOUR LOWER

A continued increase in the use of electricity on U. S. farms has resulted in a record high average monthly electric bill and a record low average cost per kilowatt-hour to farmers, according to an annual survey made by the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Reporting farmers paid an average of 2.8 cents per kwh for electricity in July 1953 compared with 2.9 cents in July 1952 and with the 1947-51 July average of 3.02 cents. On the other hand, the average electric bill paid by farmers for July 1953, at \$8.80, was 90 cents above the previous high of \$7.90 in July a year earlier and a third higher than the 5-year July average of \$6.60.

According to this survey, which included reports from over 21,000 farmers throughout the U. S., the average number of kwh used per U. S. farm in July 1953 was 317. This compares with 276 in July the previous year and with the 1947-51 July average of 216 kwh.

For the most part, those States and regions which had the greatest consumption of electricity per farm also had the lowest cost per kwh, while those with low electricity consumption had the highest cost. As a result of these two counteracting cost factors, the average monthly bill paid by farmers for electricity tended to have less variation between regions than either the kwh used or rate per kwh. (See table).

In the Pacific Coast States where a great deal of electricity is used in irrigation and where the wholesale cost of electricity is generally low, the amount of electricity used per farm reporting averaged over a thousand kwh per farm per month, over twice as much as used per farm in any other region and 6 times the average amount used in the West South Central States. The Middle Atlantic and East North Central regions, where a comparatively high percentage of farms have had electricity for a long period of time, and the Mountain States where irrigation is a factor, are the other regions where average electricity consumption was above the national average.

The average cost per kilowatt-hour by regions varies from 1.8 cents in the Pacific Coast States to 3.8 cents and 3.7 cents in the West South Central and West North Central States, respectively. The downward trend in average cost per kilowatt-hour has been fairly consistent over the various areas in the U. S., with all regions except the Pacific showing a lower average cost in 1953 than in 1951 and earlier. The greatest decline has occurred in the South Atlantic and East South Central areas. In some areas the basic rate per given amount was higher than a year earlier but generally this was offset by greater consumption of electricity on farms resulting in lower average cost per kwh used.

(Over)

KILOWATT HOURS USED, AVERAGE COST PER KILOWATT-HOUR, AND
AVERAGE MONTHLY BILL BY REGIONS 1/

	July 1947-51 Average			July 1952			July 1953				
Regions:	Kwh.	: Av.	cost: Avg.	Kwh.	: Av.	cost: Avg.	Kwh.	: Av.	cost: Avg.		
	: used	: per	: monthly	: used	: per	: monthly	: used	: per	: monthly		
	: per farms	: kwh.	: bill	: per farm	: kwh.	: bill	: per farm	: kwh.	: bill		
		<u>Ct.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>		<u>Ct.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>		<u>Ct.</u>	<u>Dol.</u>		
N. Eng.:	266	3.1	8.21	:	310	2.9	9.10	:	315	2.9	9.30
M. Atl.:	325	2.7	8.49	:	400	2.5	9.90	:	445	2.5	11.00
E. N. C.:	257	3.1	7.84	:	345	2.8	9.40	:	360	2.8	9.90
:											
W. N. C.:	184	4.1	7.50	:	240	3.8	9.10	:	260	3.7	9.80
S. Atl.:	155	3.3	5.04	:	235	2.9	6.70	:	245	2.8	6.90
E. S. C.:	141	3.2	4.38	:	200	2.7	5.50	:	220	2.6	5.70
:											
W. S. C.:	119	4.3	5.09	:	150	3.9	6.00	:	170	3.8	6.50
Mount.:	310	2.5	7.81	:	385	2.4	9.20	:	410	2.5	10.10
Pacific:	503	1.7	8.78	:	635	1.7	11.00	:	1,050	1.8	18.90
U. S.:	217	3.1	6.61	:	277	2.9	7.90	:	317	2.8	8.80

1/The survey made in July and August requested data based on "last bill". This was generally a bill for a period ending in last June, July, or early August.

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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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